The Mattancheri Male Dispensary.

132. Mr. A. B. Salem.—Will the Government be pleased to inform:—

(a) whether they have received any request from the public of Mattancheri or from any portion of it to wait upon the Diwan in deputation in the matter of the transfer or change in the personnels of the Government Medical Service attached to the Male Dispensary there;

(b) whether they have received any petition in the matter; and if so, the date and the number of the signatories thereto;

(c) whether they will be pleased to place copy or copies of that petition on the table together with the orders thereupon passed by the Government;

(d) whether they have received copies of the resolutions passed at a public meeting at Mattancheri in the same matter; if so,

(e) will the Government be pleased to state the date of receiving the resolutions, and the action taken by them upon the expression of public opinion thus brought to their notice?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—(a) Yes.

(b) Yes. A petition, dated 7th March 1927, and signed by 49 persons was received.

(c) Copy of the petition is appended (*vide Appendix III.*)

It was recorded. The Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer's reply to a similar representation made to him is also appended. (*vide Appendix IV.*)

(d) Yes.

(e) 13th April 1927. Vide answer to (c).

Mr. A. B. Salem.—(e). Sir, I asked the date of receiving the resolutions, and if any action has been taken or the expression of public opinion brought to their notice. Only the first portion is answered; that is "1st April 1927; and then, with regard to (c), the answer is "copy of the petition is appended." Is that the answer?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Please run your eyes down. Then, you will see what action has been taken. The petitioners have been informed that the people of Mattancheri are getting more experienced men.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—My question has been altogether missed.

President.—What is your question?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—My question is this: "You have received a representation. What action has been taken on the representation?"

President.—Has this reference to Mr. Oosman Khan's case?

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Mr. A. B. Salem.—I have not brought in Mr. Oosman Kha 's name. I do not want to know whether he was transferred in the exigencies of private or public service.

President.—What is it that you want then ?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I want to know what action the Government have taken on the representation made to them.

President.—The fact is that Oosman Khan was not retained there, and was transferred. Therefore, the action taken is clear. Now, Government has taken that action, and Government did not change it.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I want to know whether any reply has been given to the petitioners or if it was not only recorded.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—No reply given? There is the reply appended there.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—To whom sent ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—To the petitioner.

President.—Was the resolution sent by telegram ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—No. They sent me a telegram for reply.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—A copy of the resolution was sent by me—the President of the public meeting I have not received anything from the Government.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I issued it in my office in the name of the man who signed it first.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I sent a copy of the resolution.

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—It has been received in our office. It was recorded by Government. That reply was given to the petitioners.

President.—The question has been very carefully considered. When Oosman Khan was transferred, it was brought to my notice that the people of Mattancheri wanted him to be retained there. The matter was brought up for my reconsideration. Then I satisfied myself that it did not require reconsideration.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—When an expression of public opinion is brought to the notice of the Government, is it not the duty of the Government to enquire into it ?

President.—I do not know anything about public meetings and expression of public opinion. That is another matter. Officers in the Government service are transferred from one place to another in the exigencies of public service. The people of the place may, of course, like to have him retained there. If we were to retain like this, the man will be left in a favourable place, and we cannot allow it.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—That has been done in many cases. Favoured men are kept in favoured places, and if I am satisfied that such a thing is done, I will not certainly allow it.

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If this scheme recommends itself to the Government of Cochin, on the ground of its being an economic one, I may here sound a note of warning. I have some little experience in the matter of transport and also in the matter of bringing out barges by sea to Cochin. These are more attractive on paper than in real lives. Even if I were wrong in my view in this, I would place the following for your consideration before you sanction the same.—

The value of the barges go out of Cochin once for all, and the barges here will represent only a portion of the money that we have paid. Again, for running barges on crude oil, etc., we will be constantly sending out Government money for enriching out-siders and this will form a constant drain to take away some money from Cochin. The working of it in practice would not be as cheap as it is made to appear at present. There is also the possibility of these barges not being delivered in time in Cochin. I know as a matter of fact, many barges have floundered on their way in the Bay of Bengal, of course, in this case Government may not lose if they make their agreement for delivery here, but your scheme will be postponed, if such an accident happens. One more important matter that I would submit for your earliest consideration is, that this scheme of giving water to the town of Mattancheri can also be made a source of employing some more of our own men in the State. We can transport this water satisfactorily and easily by employing and making use of local materials men and talents and it would not be more costly than the transport now said to be under the contemplation of Government.

This work should not be done departmentally and is eminently one that should be given out on contract, as otherwise all the advantages of control and responsibility will be lost. May I also in passing refer you to the scheme of ordering two flat launches for the ferry from Scotland and the sad fate of the same. Besides there are so many other things also to be considered along with this.

I would be happy to place them for consideration in this matter before you if you are pleased to attach any weight to this communication, and afford me an opportunity for doing so.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) ABRAHAM B. SALEM.

P. S. If sanction has been already accorded, even then it is a fit matter for reconsideration. The Council or the Finance Committee has not considered the proposals for the purchase of a barge, etc.

(Sd.) A. B. SALEM.

APPENDIX III.

(Vide answer to Question No. 132.)

Copy of the Petition.

We, the inhabitants of the town of Mattancheri Native Cochin, most respectfully beg to submit the following petition to your goodself for kind consideration and pray that you will be good enough to comply with our request:—

Dr. Usman Khan has been the Hospital Surgeon of Mattancheri for nearly three years. During this period we have had full opportunity of judging his capabilities and found him to be most diligent, patient and conscientious in his work, and the success in his mode of treatment in critical cases merits high praise. He has been most useful to us all through these years, always doing his work in a thorough and reliable way. He has an

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affable manner, is very obliging with all communities of people and bears an excellent character. All the principal men of this town are well acquainted with him so that we have had every reason to be pleased with him.

We therefore most humbly request your goodself to extend the duration of his appointment as Medical Officer in Mattancheri Hospital, Cochin, for at least another three years. We may, however, add that in case he is transferred from this important business town, we will be put to considerable inconvenience and trouble, as many of us are still under his treatment.

APPENDIX IV.

(Vide answer to Question No. 132.)

Copy of the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer's reply.

With reference to your telegram dated 12th April 1927, I have the honour to inform you that transfer is made in the exigencies of Government service. Mattancheri is getting a senior and experienced Sub-Assistant Surgeon in place of Mr. Usmankhan.

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